

## VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education Washington Secretary of State

### CURRICULUM GRADES K-4

#### TEACHER: LESSON 1

#### THEME: FAIRNESS AND DIVERSITY WITH ONE VOTE

Engaging students in discussions about voting is an excellent way to help them move from shallow to deep thinking, and to demonstrate the higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The exercises below are designed to help students internalize the importance of voting so they are more likely to become active voters when they reach adulthood.

#### Tasks:

1. Explains how one's feelings and actions can be similar or different from those of others.
2. Describes situations that are fair in relation to him/herself and others. Identifies classroom rules and explains how the rules balance the needs of individuals and groups.
3. Explains why it is important for people to work together to solve problems.
4. Explains that people in other cultures may eat different foods because of geography, culture and personal taste.

#### ACTIVITIES:

Ask students to discuss what it means to be fair. Ask for examples of their personal experiences where something wasn't fair. ("My little brother gets away with things that I get punished for." "A few students misbehaved, and we all missed recess.") What if one group of people thinks something is fair, and another group thinks it isn't? What is the best way to decide? Voting is a way to decide what most of the people want. It doesn't mean that one group is right and the other is wrong. It just means that more people choose A than choose B. In places where people don't vote, decisions are often made by fighting.

Ask students what kind of voting could occur in the classroom to ensure that everyone is treated fairly. For example, could students vote on where they sit, on what activities/games they play during recess, etc.?

Mention that in some states people who break the law by committing serious crimes (felonies) lose their right to vote. Ask students if they believe this is fair. Would it be fair to tell a student who misbehaves repeatedly that he/she has lost the right to vote on classroom issues? Should there be a way to earn back your voting privilege? Why or why not?

Say to students: Today we are going to conduct a poll to find out your favorite foods. When I call on you, tell us what your favorite food is, and I will write it on the board.

Now, pretend you are a group of students from (whatever country/culture is being studied.) If we conducted a poll to find out **your** favorite foods, what would you say when I called on you? Put this list on the board and discuss the differences.

You may have students from different cultures (and food preferences) in your classroom.